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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 GEORGETOWN 000064

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [BEXP](#) [ABUD](#) [BTIO](#) [ECON](#) [EINV](#) [ETRD](#) [GY](#)

SUBJECT: GEORGETOWN FY06 BFIF PROPOSAL

REF: 05 STATE 215954

1. SUMMARY: Embassy Georgetown submits a proposal for USD \$6,000 under the Business Facilitation Incentive Fund (BFIF) to host a seminar on electronic commerce. Post proposes to coordinate this project with the regional Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) office in Santo Domingo and the U.S. Agency for International Development's Guyana Trade and Investment Support program. This project will provide additional resources and support to U.S. investors as well as Guyanese exporters and will help to support Post's Mission Program Plan (MPP) goal of strengthening Guyana-U.S. business opportunities. END SUMMARY.

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OVERVIEW AND JUSTIFICATION  
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2. Embassy Georgetown proposes to host a seminar on electronic commerce and business development. The audience for this event, to be offered at two locations in Guyana (Georgetown, the capital, and New Amsterdam, the eastern financial center), will include Government of Guyana (GOG) policymakers, local business people, and representatives of interested trade organizations, including the American Chamber of Commerce in Guyana. Post proposes to welcome a U.S.-based consultant with expertise in the use of IT for marketing to headline the event. The event will also provide an opportunity for the local Economic/Commercial Officer to showcase USG e-commerce resources, such as [www.export.gov](#) and [www.buyusa.gov](#).

3. Such a seminar would come at an opportune time for e-commerce development. In a recent speech on economic priorities, President Bharrat Jagdeo identified information technology as a prime lever for investment. In addition, the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce has drafted an E-Commerce Bill that seeks to establish the legal environment for the conduct of electronic commerce and the processing of electronic transactions. The Ministry is presently engaged in discussions and consultations on the Draft E-Commerce Bill.

4. The Guyanese market offers strong potential to leverage IT in business facilitation. The U.S. is Guyana's number one source of imports and number two destination for exports. Post's commercial assistant regularly receives requests for information on how to conduct business with the United States. Nevertheless, knowledge of FCS electronic resources is limited. In addition, while a number of entities in Guyana market themselves on line, especially in the tourism area, knowledge of best practices for marketing a product on the internet is unsophisticated. Facilitation of e-commerce for marketing purposes would greatly enhance the ability of U.S. business entities to gain market information, including data on prices and product appearance. Early successes in post's other efforts to increase the use of IT in its operations, such as the Consular Section's promotion of the Electronic Visa Application Form (EVAF), suggest that government-to-consumer IT applications are relevant in Guyana.

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PERFORMANCE METRICS / ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES  
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5. The E-Commerce program will increase access to the Guyanese market for U.S. investors and will provide contacts for Guyanese companies and individuals eager to build commercial ties to the United States. Specific performance metrics will include the number of Guyanese companies doing business on-line and increases in the number of Guyanese visitors to USG electronic commercial diplomacy resources.

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PLANNING MILESTONES  
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6. Post will collaborate with USAID's Guyana Trade and Investment Support program in the vetting and selection of the consultant to lead the program. The Economic/Commercial Section will also secure the attendance of a high-level GOG official to be the keynote speaker and invite representatives of various trade organizations in such industries as tourism, crafts, and financial services.

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ESTIMATED COSTS  
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17. The anticipated cost for this project is \$US 6,000 to fund travel, hotel and per diem for a U.S. based consultant, site rental, and add placement in local media outlets. The budget for the program will also include brochures listing USG commercial resources on-line. Post also proposes to use BFIF funds to purchase a booth at the GuyExpo trade fair, where Economic/Commercial section staff will distribute brochures promoting USG online commercial diplomacy resources. The budget assumes the following:

\$4,500 for travel, fees, hotel and per diem for a U.S. based consultant  
\$150 for print media and TV advertising  
\$750 for brochures  
\$600 for site rental, booth rental at GuyExpo and FSN overtime

18. Point of contact through November 2006 is Economic/Commercial Officer Ed Luchessi. He can be reached at IVG 747-0220 or LuchessiEP@state.gov.

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